

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A software system for managing available to
promise (ATP) and making promises to fulfill customer
requests, the software system comprising:

5 a plurality of seller models representing sellers
that sell at least one product, the seller models
operable to forecast for at least one product and
operable to choose commitment levels creating forecast
requests;

10 the forecast requests receiving promises made by
supplier sites to provide product allocation to the
organization; and

the product allocation available to the sellers to
promise to actual customer requests;

15 wherein the plurality of seller models comprise a
hierarchy that has an organization and one or more
members such that product allocation to the organization
can be used by the organization or promised to and used
by the members; and

20 wherein the organization has a portion of the
product allocation designated as first-come-first-served
product, the first-come-first-served product available
for consumption by the members as needed to promise to
actual customer requests.

25 2. The software system of Claim 1, wherein the
organization further has a portion of the product.

the organization and availability of the organization or for promising

3. A software system for managing available to
promise (ATP) and making promises to fulfill customer
requests, the software system comprising:

5 a plurality of seller models representing sellers
that sell at least one product, the seller models
operable to forecast for at least one product and
operable to choose commitment levels creating forecast
requests;

10 the forecast requests receiving promises made by
supplier sites to provide product allocation to the
organization; and

the product allocations available to the sellers to
promise to actual customer requests;

15 wherein the plurality of seller models comprise a
hierarchy that has an organization and one or more
members such that product allocation to the organization
can be used by the organization or promised to and used
by the members; and

20 wherein the organization has an ATP horizon defined
at a greater granularity than the forecast, the ATP
horizon having ATP entries representing an amount of
product from the product allocation that is available
during each forecast period.

4. A software system for managing available to
promise (ATP) and making promises to fulfill customer
requests, the software system comprising:

5 a plurality of seller models representing sellers
that sell at least one product; the seller models
operable to forecast for the at least one product and
operable to choose commitment levels creating forecast
requests;

10 the forecast requests receiving promises made by
supplier sites to provide product allocation to the
organization; and

the product allocations available to the sellers to
promise to actual customer requests;

15 wherein the plurality of seller models comprise a
hierarchy that has an organization and one or more
members such that product allocation to the organization
can be used by the organization or promised to and used
by the members; and

20 wherein the organization promises product to the
members based upon an automatic allocation policy.

25 5. The software system of Claim 4, wherein the
automatic allocation policy allows the organization to
designate forecast entry of a member as a zero-ATP entry
such that the available-to-promise product at the member
is zero for that forecast entry.

6. The software system of Claim 4, wherein the automatic allocation policy is an FCFS allocation policy.

5 7. The software system of Claim 4, wherein the automatic allocation policy is a per allocated allocation policy.

10 8. The software system of Claim 4, wherein the automatic allocation policy is a per committed allocation policy.

15 9. The software system of Claim 4, wherein the automatic allocation policy is a member rank allocation policy.

10. The software system of Claim 4, wherein the automatic allocation policy is a fixed split allocation policy.

11 A software system for managing available to
promise (ATP) and making promises to fulfill customer
requests, the software system comprising:

5 a plurality of generic product models each
representing a generic product, each generic product
model specifying one component of a plurality of possible
components;

10 a plurality of specific product models each
representing a specific product, each specific product
model specifying all components of the specific product;

wherein each component specified by each specific
product model is specified by one of the generic product
models, such that each specific product model is related
to a subset of the generic product models; and

15 wherein a customer request matching a specific
product can be fulfilled by available-to-promise of the
specific product or by available-to-promise of all
related generic products.

20 12. The software system of Claim 11, wherein the
generic product models and specific product models are
repeated across a seller hierarchy, such that, in
addition to generic-specific relationships, there are
organization-member relationships between generic
25 products and between specific products.